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ABSTRACT

This theme issue focuses on academic competitions for academically talented youth. It lists approximately 30 selected competitions from a variety of academic areas, describing their eligible grade levels, types of projects or tests involved, fees, awards, and deadlines. An article describes the National Merit Scholarship Program and use of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test as a screening test. A list of books named by distinguished graduating high school seniors as "the most stimulating book they have read outside school in the past 6 months" is provided. A review of Stanford University (California) is presented, based on evaluations by 16 students enrolled there. The newsletter concludes with a page of students' creative work, including a book review, poem, and puzzles. (JDD)

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VOLUME 1 • NUMBER 1

ImaGiNe...

Opportunities and Resources for Academically Talented Youth

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ED 375 536

September/October 1993

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Spotlight On:

ENTERING ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS

Members of the Iowa ARML team consult with their coach during the Relay Round of the national competition at the University of Iowa (See p. 5)

Photo by Genna S. Herron, courtesy of the Connie Belin National Center for Gifted Education

Why enter a competition? Just imagine yourself in an activity where you could:

- Explore new intellectual paths, or delve more deeply into a subject that already interests you.
- Enjoy the thrill of the chase, yet know you're a winner no matter where you finish.
- Experience the camaraderie of being with others who are as bright and turned on by learning as you are.

Sound appealing? Then you're in for a treat. With so many excellent competitions from which to choose, you're sure to find one—or more—just suited to your own particular style.

Academic competitions are available in many different formats. In some, you compete as an individual by taking a single test; in others, you compete as part of a team in a series of events. Some are conducted by mail, by computer, in your own school; others, especially at the state or national level, involve travel to central sites around the country.

Yet what competitions all have in common is their ability to stimulate academically talented students who are looking for an intellectual challenge outside the school curriculum.

To whet your appetite, we focus in this issue of *Imagine* on selected competitions from a variety of academic areas. When you see one that interests you, find out if your school or larger community already participates. If not, send or call for information on how to initiate this particular competition in your area. Then share the information with your friends, your principal, and teachers who may agree to become coaches.

Combining lots of enthusiasm with some serious preparation, you can create an exciting outlet for your mental energy. *Go for it!*

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WELCOME TO *IMAGINE* . . .

a newsletter for precollege students who are seeking opportunities for greater academic challenge . . .

Academically talented students often have difficulty feeling challenged in the regular classroom, particularly today when tight budgets and shifting priorities are contributing to the elimination of "gifted and talented" programs in many districts. Yet students and their parents may be uncertain about where to turn for alternatives.

Helping talented students develop challenging educational plans and locate supplemental opportunities has been a major focus of the Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth (SMPY) since 1971, under the pioneering direction of Professor Julian C. Stanley at The Johns Hopkins University. This activity is now the primary mission of SMPY's successor, the Study of Exceptional Talent (SET) at the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth (CTY).

The philosophy of both SMPY and SET recognizes that no one program is capable of meeting *all* the needs of *all* academically talented students, nor do we believe that learning should be limited to what occurs in school.

Each student is unique. Each has individual abilities and learning styles, and these differences should be recognized and respected. Intellectual, social, and emotional maturity may not all proceed at the same rate. Specific strengths, weaknesses, interests, personality, and motivation—as well as resources available in the home, school, and community—all should be considered in designing a program to meet a student's needs.

Drawing upon twenty years of experience, the SET staff has developed *Imagine* as a periodic newsletter that will provide the kind of information students need to achieve an "optimal match" between their interests and abilities and their educational programming. *Imagine* will explore the full range of possible options, including subject-matter acceleration or grade skipping, independent study, correspondence courses, mentorships and internships, and specialized extracurricular activities such as academic competitions, foreign study and travel, and academic summer programs.

Five issues of *Imagine* will be published during the 1993-94 school year, each with a different primary focus:

- September/October **Entering Academic Competitions**
- November/December **Planning Ahead for College**
- January/February **Choosing Academic Summer Programs**
- March/April **Getting the Best Precollege Education**
- May/June **Exploring Career Options**

Our intention is to provide the tools students need to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, reach for academic excellence, and achieve to the full extent of their individual capabilities. We welcome comments and suggestions from our readers.

Dear Readers, we'd like to hear from you. Send us your ideas for articles, or questions to be answered by the *Imagine* staff in an on-going Mailbag column. Students, submit your creative work—poems, brain teasers, shorts stories/essays/book reviews. Tell us about academic programs that have challenged you or paths you have devised for your own intellectual growth.

Please write to:

Imagine
SET at CTY
The Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, MD 21218-9985

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Opportunities and Resources for Academically Talented Youth

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▪ ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS ▪

Foundation for Scholastic Advancement

- Grades 9-12
- 4 exams—mathematics, English, history, and science (biology, chemistry, and physics).
- Students set own pace in initial individual round, then combine as 3-member teams for team rounds and pressure rounds. Strategy and teamwork highlighted, in addition to subject knowledge.
- Each subject contest is held once in academic year: mathematics, 2nd week January; English, 2nd week February; history, early March; science, late March-early April. (Teachers may request change in test date if conflicts arise.)
- Teachers must register their schools for each contest at least 6-8 weeks before test date.
- Fee: $30 per subject; exams may be copied for each participant in school.
- Recognition on school and national level for each subject; certificates and ribbons for school winners; school plaques, team certificates and medals for top 10 teams in nation.

Future Problem Solving Program (FPS)

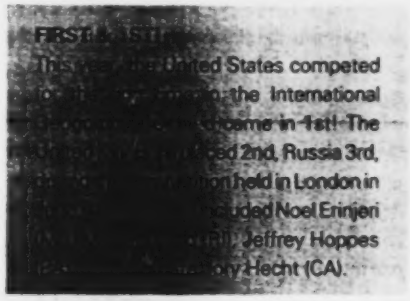
- Grades 7-9, Intermediate Division; grades 10-12, Senior Division
- Complex scientific and social problems of the future solved by six-step process requiring critical thinking, research, creativity, communication skills, and teamwork.
- 4-person teams complete 3 problem booklets during academic year—2 for practice, 1 for competition. Teams receive evaluations of each booklet submitted, a newsletter subscription, and consultant assistance. Teams with best performance on qualifying problem compete at State Bowls in spring; winners invited to International FPS.
- Booklets due October, January, March; State FPS, spring; International Conference, June.
- Fee: $100 per team
- Also Community Problem Solving Division, Scenario Writing Contest, and Primary Division for younger students.

Knowledge Master Open

- Two divisions: middle/junior high, high school
- Higher-level thinking skills and knowledge across range of curricula, including world history, geography, literature, math, sciences, art, and music.
- One team (any number) per school; requires use of one Apple II, Macintosh, or IBM (MS-DOS) computer for disk with 200 multiple-choice questions (2-3 hours); scores based on accuracy and speed.
- December 8, 1993, and April 20, 1994
- Fee: $32 for one date, $48 for both
- Additional educational software available, including short-answer intramural competitions, Knowledge Bowl (grades 9-12), and Academic Bowl (grades 6-8).

National Geography Bee

- Grades 4-8
- Political, physical, economic, cultural, and environmental components.
- Students compete in oral school Bees; school winner takes written qualifying exam; 100 top scorers compete in state or territory Bee; winners go to nationals.
- School principals must register by October 15. School Bees held December 13, 1993-January 14, 1994; state/territory Bees, April 8, 1994; nationals in Washington, DC, May 24-25, 1994.
- Fee: None
- Top three national winners receive college scholarships of $25,000, $15,000, and $10,000.



Texaco Star National Academic Championship

- Grades 9-12
- *To be eligible, teams must have won an academic competition involving at least 16 schools.* Teams are composed of 4 starters, 2 alternates, 1 or 2 coaches (one must be a school employee).
- Emphasis on quick recall; copyrighted 4-quarter format created by Questions Unlimited.
- June 4-10, 1994, at Rice University
- Fee: $175 per person, includes room and board
- $75,000 in Texaco Foundation scholarships; number of participating teams is limited, so register promptly.

United States Academic Decathlon

- Grades 9-12
- 10 events: language and literature, mathematics, science, economics, fine arts, social science, speech, interview, essay, and Super Quiz.
- 9-member school teams composed of students with A, B, and C averages; all students compete in all events against others in their category.
- Check with your state director for registration deadline. Practice Test Booklet released, teams formed, September; local competitions, November; regional, February; state, March; national finals, April.
- Fee varies by state; call or write for name of your state director.
- In nationals, gold, silver, and bronze medalists receive $5000, $3000, $2000 scholarships. National Finals 1994 will be held in Newark, NY.

"Participate in competitions, especially those that bring together students from a wide area. Often the conversations you have at these events increase your knowledge and interest in [illegible]."

Future

Scholastic

Future

National

United Sta

Cerritos, CA 90701-5165
(310) 809-4555

* Students qu
academic compe

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Junior Classical League chapters, which usually double as Latin Clubs, exist in thousands of middle and high schools across the country. The League consists of dues-paying students with an interest in matters Greek and Roman. All in all, JCL serves as a much-needed supplement to the classical curriculum."

NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing
1111 W. Kenyon Road
Urbana, IL 61801-1096

National Federation of Press Women High School Journalism Contest
Headquarters Office
PO Box 99
Blue Springs, MO 64013
(816) 229-1666

National Peace Essay Contest

International Writing and Photography Contest
University of Iowa

(319) 335-6795

German Testing & Awards Program
American Association of Teachers of German
112 Haddontowne Ct. #104
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034
(609) 795-5553

French Contest
Teachers of French

National Greek Exam
American Classical League
Miami University
Oxford, OH 45056

National Latin Exam
American Classical League/
National Junior Classical League
PO Box 95
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

National Council of Teachers of English Achievement Awards in Writing

- For US and Canadian students who are juniors in 1993-94 academic year and will graduate in 1995.
- Each high school selects its own nominee/s (number based on total 10th-12th grade enrollment). One criterion suggested by NCTE is whether the writer exhibits the power to inform and move an audience through use of the English language.
- Nominees submit two written compositions—an impromptu theme on NCTE-designated topic written under teacher supervision in no more than 75 minutes, and a writing sample the student considers his/her best work.
- Nomination deadline, January 23, 1994; impromptu theme topic and instructions sent to designated teacher in March; writing entries deadline, April 21, 1994.
- Fee: None
- Up to 876 awards are announced in October of students' senior year. Winners receive certificates of commendation, and their names are sent to 3,000 US colleges and universities with recommendations for admission and financial aid.
- Winners and nominees may also submit their work to Scholastic Writing Awards. For official rules booklet, write to Scholastic Writing Awards, 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

National Federation of Press Women High School Journalism Contest

- Grades 9-12
- Categories include feature, news, sports writing, and photography; additional categories will be announced for this year's competition.
- Local contests are held by state affiliates; winners advance to national contest.
- Fees and deadlines are set by state affiliates; call or write for state contact.

National Peace Essay Contest

- Grades 9-12
- Sponsored by independent, nonpartisan federal institution.
- Students, who participate as members of club with adult coordinator, receive specific instructions and suggestions for writing a successful essay.
- Deadline to submit essay with registration form, February.
- Fee: None
- Award-winning essays are published in contest yearbook. Top essayists at state level receive expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC; winners at national level win college scholarships of $500 to $10,000.

Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee
Call your local newspaper to ask whether they participate in this regional and national competition and how you may enter locally.

Quill and Scroll International Writing and Photography Contest

- Junior and senior high divisions
- 8 junior high divisions: editorial, cartoon, news story, feature story, general column, sports story, photography/feature, photography/sports.
  10 senior high divisions: editorial, editorial cartoon, news story, photography/news feature, general column, photography/sports, feature story, in-depth story about individual or team, advertisement, sports story.
- Submissions must have been published in a school, local, or national newspaper during the period February 6, 1993-February 5, 1994.
- Entry forms are sent to high schools in late November; forms also published in *Quill and Scroll* magazine. Register by February 5, 1994.
- Fee: $2 per entry, maximum two per division.
- Winners receive gold key charm and letter of recognition, and are eligible as seniors to apply for college scholarships if they plan to major in an accredited journalism program.

National German Test

- Students enrolled in German II-IV
- Listening comprehension, reading and conversational skills, applied structure and grammar, comprehension of connected passages.
- 100 multiple-choice items, 65 minutes.
- Information sent to German teachers, October; deadline for orders and fees, December 1; test, between mid-December and mid-January.
- Fee: $4 per student
- Students scoring 90% or more are eligible to apply for month-long travel-study summer program in Germany, all expenses paid; awards ceremonies, some book/cash prizes.

National Latin Exam

- Students enrolled in Latin I-V
- Latin I-IV: grammar, mythology, culture, history, derivatives, questions on short passage in Latin. Latin V: comprehension, grammar, historical background, classical literature.
- 40-minute multiple choice exams for each level.
- Registration deadline, January 10, 1994; testing in schools, March 7-11, 1994.
- Teacher registration, $3 per student.
- Gold and silver medals and certificates go to winners. Gold medal winners in Latin III-V who are high school seniors are eligible to apply for $1,000 scholarships if they agree to take at least one year of Latin or classical Greek in college.
- The American Classical League also sponsors state and national conventions with competitions in Greek and Latin, classical art, drama, and oratory. Next national convention to be held at the University of Tennessee, August 1994.

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American Junior High School Mathematics Examination (AJHSME)*

- Grades 8 and below
- Arithmetic of integers, fractions and decimals, percent and proportion, number theory, informal geometry, perimeter, area, volume, probability and statistics, and logical reasoning.
- Written 40-minute, 25-question, multiple-choice examination given at area schools.
- School registration, October; exams given 1st Thursday after Thanksgiving.
- Fee: $10/school, plus $15/packet of 25 exams.
- Good preparation for AHSME.

American High School Mathematics Examination (AHSME)*

- Grades 12 and below
- Non-calculus secondary school mathematics.
- 30 multiple-choice questions, 1-1/2 hours.
- Schools register, January; test, February-March.
- $15/school, plus $7.50/packet of 10 exams.
- Students scoring 100 are eligible for AIME.

American Invitational Mathematics Examination (AIME)

- All students in US and Canada who score at least 100 on AHSME are invited to participate.
- 3-hour exam of 15 questions requiring integer answers from 0 to 999; non-calculus secondary school mathematics.
- Exam given three weeks after AHSME.
- Fee: None
- Up to 140 highest scorers move on to the USA Mathematical Olympiad (USAMO) exam, late April: 5 essay/proof questions requiring deep insight and ingenuity; 3-1/2 hours. Top 8 scorers and their parents are honored in Washington, DC; then with 16 selected others attend the 4-week Mathematical Olympiad Training Session (MOTS), held at the US Naval Academy or US Military Academy. Finally, 6 are chosen for US team to the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO).

IMO 1993

Students from 50 nations competed in Istanbul, Turkey, July 13-24. The top 10 teams (in rank order) were China, Germany, Bulgaria, Russia, Taiwan, Iran, USA, Hungary, Viet Nam, and the Czech Republic. All 6 on US team won medals: Andrew Dittmer (VA) and Lenhard Ng (NC), gold; Wei-Hwa Huang (MD) and Stephen Wang (IL), silver; Jeremy Bem (NY) and Tim Chklovski (MN), bronze.

**If your school does not participate in the American Mathematics Competitions, contact Dr. Mientka for information on taking tests through another school in your area.*

MATHCOUNTS

- Grades 7 & 8
- Progressively difficult items testing mathematical accuracy, reasoning, and problem solving. Timed written and oral components; multiple rounds of individual and team competitions.
- Schools register for competition phase by November 15, 1993 (late registration, January 14, 1994); coaching, September-February; school team selection (4 students per school) and chapter competitions, February; state competitions, March; national competition, May 1994.
- Fee: $30 per school
- Top 4 students in each state competition win all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC, for nationals; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place national winners receive $8,000, $6,000, $4,000 college scholarships; winner of written portion and winning team members each receive $2,000 scholarship.

Helpful Hint:

- One excellent way to prepare for mathematics competitions is to work on problems from former years. The Mathematical Association of America (MAA) offers problem-solving books from AHSME, AIME, USAMO, and IMO levels, as well as from the college-level Putnam competition. Write to or call MAA for a catalog.

MATHCOUNTS problems are available from the MATHCOUNTS Foundation.

American Regions Math League (ARML)

- Grades 9-12
- National competition among teams composed of 15 students plus 2 alternates, locally chosen to represent counties, cities, or states. Held simultaneously at Pennsylvania State University and University of Iowa on the first Saturday after Memorial Day.
- Fee: (to be set in March; about $45 including room and board)
- Prizes of books, calculators, trophies; some small cash awards.

National Mathematics League

- Grades 6-12
- 7 divisions: sixth grade, pre-algebra, algebra I, algebra II, geometry, precalculus, calculator.
- For each of 5 contests in 7 divisions, 6 open-answer problems in 30-minute exam.
- Entry deadline for schools, October; 5 separate contests held in school, January-April.
- Fee: $40 per contest division
- Schools informed of cumulative results; ribbons for student winners, plaques for schools.

"The math competitions [illegible] had the opportunity to travel and meet other students were especially exciting to me since they introduced me to what I call 'the world of mathematics.'"

"Math contests make math seem more fun and pique one's desire to do more than ordinary math. They encourage elegance and creativity, without which contest problems are designed to be unsolvable."

registration questions only:
MATHCOUNTS Registration
P.O. Box 441
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701
(301) 498-6141

all other questions:
MATHCOUNTS Foundation
National Society of Professional Engineers
1420 King Street
[illegible]

***American [illegible]**
Dr. Walter [illegible], AMC Director
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
University of Nebraska
1740 Vine Street
Lincoln, NE 68588-0658
(402) 472-2257

American Regions Math League
Mark E. Saul, ARML President
711 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10025
(212) 666-5188
or
Barbara Rockow
ARML Corresponding Secretary
Bronx High School of Science
75 West 205th Street
Bronx, NY 10468
(718) 295-0200

National Mathematics League
Box 9459
Coral Springs, FL 33075
(305) 344-8980

MAA Publications:
Mathematical Association of America
1529 18th Street, NW
[illegible]

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"There was never really one specific moment when I chose math/science; my love for math and science has developed gradually. The Science Fair was one of the most mathematically healthy experiences I've had. It was really the first time I'd picked out a project and worked on it all on my own."

JETS TEAMS
1420 King Street
Suite 405
Alexandria, VA 22314-2794
(703) 548-5387

International Science and Engineering Fair
Science Service, Inc.
1719 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-2255

US National Chemistry Olympiad
Education Division
American Chemical Society
1155-16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 872-6328

Westinghouse Science Talent Search
Science Service, Inc.
1719 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-2255

JETS TEAMS

Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics, and Science (TEAMS), sponsored by Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS)

- Grades 9-12
- Engineering problems to be solved using mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, visual interpretation of information, computer applications, and reading analysis and interpretation.
- Revised format for '94: one-day national event consisting of 2 parts, 1-1/2 hours each, held at various locations in each state. Varsity engineering teams of 4-8 students work together to answer both objective (state level) and subjective, open-ended (national level) questions. One varsity team per school; junior varsity teams may participate, but are not eligible for national awards. Teams compete in divisions based on size and type of school.
- Registration deadline, fee, and exact event date (between February 6 and March 19, 1994) are set by local/state competition hosts.
- JETS also sponsors the National Engineering Aptitude Search (NEAS), a guidance test measuring mathematical understanding, scientific reading and reasoning ability, and conceptual problem solving strengths; and the National Engineering Design Challenge (NEDC), involving real-life applications of engineering concepts used to design and build a product for a specific need.

International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF)

- Grades 9-12
- *To participate, student or team must have been a finalist in ISEF-affiliated regional or state fair.* (If your school is not involved in science fair activities, write to ISEF for name of your area fair director.)
- Students display project and discuss mutual interests with over 1,000 judges and more than 750 other contestants; also visit area universities, research centers, industry, cultural/historical sites.
- May 8-14, 1994, in Birmingham, Alabama.
- Fee: None; students and their official parties receive all-expenses-paid trip to ISEF.
- Over 600 Grand and Special Awards in specific disciplines are supported by corporations, foundations, federal agencies, industrial organizations, and Science Service; such awards include college scholarships, computers, and overseas trips, including one to the Nobel Prize Ceremony in Stockholm, Sweden.

Science Service, sponsor of both the ISEF and Westinghouse Science Talent Search, offers a *Directory of Student Science Training Programs for Precollege Students* ($3). See address to order.

US National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO)

- Grades 9-12 (US citizens)
- Local American Chemical Society sections identify outstanding students for national exam (limit 2 students per school). Consult your chemistry teacher about local process.
- 2 sections, multiple choice and essay; 4 hours.
- National test, April
- Fee: None
- Top-scoring 20 students attend two-week study camp at US Air Force Academy in June. Then, 4 students are chosen for US team to International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO).

1993 IChO & IPO

At the 25th IChO held this July in Perugia, Italy, teams from 38 countries competed. The US team was one of three top winners, with the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. All US team members won medals: Christopher Herzog (NJ) and Daniel Katz (CA), gold; David Hurr (PA) and Robert West (OH), silver. Next year's IChO will be [illegible].

[illegible] the 24th International Physics Olympiad (IPO) took place in Williamsburg, Virginia, with teams from 22 countries. US team members were [illegible] (gold medal), Daniel Schepler (silver), Hal J. Burch and Dmitri Linde (bronze), and Chang Shih Chan (honorable mention).

Westinghouse Science Talent Search

- Grade 12 only
- Independent research project in physical sciences, behavioral/social sciences, engineering, mathematics, or biological sciences (excluding live vertebrate experimentation).
- Student submits written report, with school transcript, test scores, and teacher recommendations; 300 honors semifinalists; 40 invited as finalists to 5-day Science Talent Institute.
- Entry materials available in August; entry deadline, December 1, 1993; semifinalists and finalists announced, January; Science Talent Institute, March 1994.
- Fee: None
- All-expenses-paid Science Talent Institute in Washington, DC, includes public exhibition of projects, meetings with distinguished scientists and public officials, sightseeing, and awards banquet and ceremony. Top 10 winners receive college scholarships of $10,000-$40,000; remaining 30 receive $1,000 scholarships.

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ACSL Computer Science Contest

- Grades 7-12
- 4 competitions a year for school teams only; 3- or 5-member teams compete in their own school against other teams in their division across the country; top 15% invited to All-Star national competition at site to be announced.
- Teachers register schools, December 1.
- Fee: $125 per school
- Trophies and plaques to top-scoring teams and students; national All-Star winners earn personal computers, computer-related books and magazines.

USA Computing Olympiad (USACO)

- Replaces International Computer Problem Solving Contest (ICPSC).
- Grades 9-12
- Algorithmic computer problem solving in limited time.
- Qualifying Round at schools, 5 problems; students who solve at least 3 qualify for 5-hour Competition Round of one problem. Top 15 nationally are invited to week-long USACO at University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
- School coordinator registers at least one week before Qualifying Round, February; Competition Round, March; USACO, June.
- Fee: 1st round free; 2nd, to be determined
- Top 4 students and one alternate from USACO form US team to International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI). The '93 IOI will be held in Argentina this October.

Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards Program

- Grades 7-9, 10-12 (also younger divisions).
- Students use their imaginations and tools of science and technology to create and explore a vision 20 years into the future. Sections include history, present and future technology, breakthroughs, and consequences.
- Students work in teams of 4 with teacher-advisor to develop written descriptions and 10 storyboards, as though creating scenes for a video. Regional and national judging; teams advancing to national level receive funds to produce a video presentation.
- Entry kit available, September; ExploraVision entry to NSTA, February 1; national competition in Washington, DC, June.
- Fee: None
- In regional judging, schools of the 48 winning teams receive Toshiba educational products. In national judging, members of 4 winning teams each receive $10,000 US savings bonds; members of 8 runner-up teams each receive $5,000 US savings bonds; schools and teacher-advisors receive Toshiba products.

Duracell/NSTA Scholarship Competition

- Grades 9-12, residents of US or US Territories.
- Panel of scientists and science educators judge entries on creativity, energy efficiency, practicality, and clarity of writing.
- Entrant creates and builds a working device powered by one or more Duracell batteries; sends in photograph, 2-page typewritten description, and wiring diagram with official entry form; 100 selected finalists then send devices to Duracell Headquarters for final judging.
- Deadline for entry, January 21, 1994; finalists submit devices and winners notified, March.
- Fee: None
- All entrants receive gift and certificate; 41 winners receive awards: $100 (25, 4th-place); $500 (10, 3rd-place); $10,000 savings bond (5, 2nd-place); $20,000 savings bond (1, 1st-place). Top 6 winners, their parents, and their teacher/sponsors (who receive personal computers) attend 42nd NSTA National Convention Awards Banquet in Anaheim, California, in April.

United States High School Chess Championship

- Grades K-12
- All participants must be members of USCF; all schools entering team competition must be affiliates of USCF.
- Early entry cutoff is usually 2-3 weeks before the event, to be held April 29-May 1, 1994, at Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan.
- Fee: $20 in advance; $40 late registration
- Contact USCF for National Scholastic Entry form; details also in USCF's national magazines.

For information on other competitions, consult these resources:

■ The National Association of Secondary School Principals publishes a booklet entitled *NASSP National Advisory List of Contests and Activities*. Their 1993-94 issue is available for $5 plus $3 shipping and handling; send your order with payment to NASSP, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1537.

■ *Science & Math Events: Connecting & Competing* (1990) is published in paperback by the National Science Teachers Association, 1742 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-1171. The charge is $8.50 plus $3.50 for shipping and handling. To order, call (800) 732-6782.

...Computer Science ...competition was one of ...most stimulating academic events I was involved in. It increased my interest in both computers and math."

Computer Science Contest
American Computer Science League
PO Box 02940
Providence, RI 02940
(401) 822-4312

USA Computing Olympiad
Dr. Donald T. Piele, USACO Director
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Box No. 2000
Kenosha, WI 53141-2000
(414) 634-0868

Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards Program
National Science Teachers Association
1742 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009-1171
(202) 328-5800

Duracell/NSTA Scholarship Competition
National Science Teachers Association
1742 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 328-5800

US Chess Federation (USCF)
186 Route 9W
New Windsor, NY 12553
(914) 562-8350

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PSAT/NMSQT AND THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM:

OPPORTUNITIES NOT TO BE MISSED

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is offered each October. Useful as practice for the SAT, it also serves as the qualifying examination for National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) programs *and* as a link to other opportunities.

By now you've probably heard that the College Board is replacing both the PSAT/NMSQT and SAT with new versions designed to enhance the test scores' usefulness. The new PSAT/NMSQT will be introduced this fall. The new SAT, to be profiled in a coming issue, will first be offered next spring.

Format

The new PSAT/NMSQT is divided into four 30-minute sections, alternating verbal and math. The verbal segments still include sentence completions and analogies, but no longer use antonyms. Reading passages are longer, with some paired passages where you are asked to compare different points of view. Sentence completions are used to test vocabulary.

In the math segments, both tests still include multiple-choice questions and quantitative comparisons. In addition, some new open-ended questions require you to record your own answers. The College Board recommends that you bring and use a calculator; the PSAT/NMSQT *Student Bulletin* describes approved and prohibited calculators.

NMSC Programs

The PSAT/NMSQT serves as the screening test for the National Merit Scholarship Program and for the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students. These annual competitions are conducted without government funding by the non-profit NMSC.

Program Eligibility

To be eligible for these programs, you must be a US citizen or a permanent resident in the process of becoming a US citizen, and you must be enrolled full time in a high school.

If you plan to complete high school in the usual four years, the only way you may apply for consideration by these programs is by taking the PSAT/NMSQT in your junior year of high school. (Even if you take the test for practice as a sophomore, you must retake it as a junior.) If you are accelerating your high school studies, you must take the PSAT/NMSQT before you begin full-time college study.

Achievement Scholarships

This year the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students awarded 800 college scholarships (400 "National," 200 corporate-sponsored, and 200 college/university-sponsored awards) to Black Americans. Students eligible for this program must indicate their interest when they take the PSAT/NMSQT. They may be considered for both an Achievement Scholarship and a Merit Scholarship, but winners will receive an offer only in one category.

Find out whether your school will administer this year's PSAT/NMSQT on Tuesday, October 12, or on Saturday, October 16; check with your teacher or counselor to sign up. If you are a high school junior and want to be considered for the 1995 National Merit Scholarship Corporation programs, you *must* take the 1993 PSAT/NMSQT this fall.

Merit Scholarships

Over one million high school students will meet the basic eligibility requirements for the 1995 Merit Program when they take the PSAT/NMSQT this fall. In April 1994, recognition will be given to about 50,000 participants who score highest nationally. At that time these students may name two colleges or universities to whom they want their names sent by NMSC; these institutions respond by providing information about opportunities on their campuses.

Next September, about 35,000 of these 50,000 high scorers will be named Commended Scholars and will not continue in the competition.

The remaining 15,000 students will be named as Semifinalists, based on a selection index that consists of a composite of their PSAT/NMSQT math and verbal scores. At this level, specific cutoff scores vary from state to state; less than half of one percent of any state's high school seniors become Semifinalists.

The Semifinalists then submit additional materials, including high school records, a principal's recommendation, and information about their interests, accomplishments, and goals. Contenders must also receive comparable scores on an SAT.

In February 1995, NMSC will identify about 14,000 Finalists, who will then be considered for Merit Scholarships. After further evaluation, only about 6,500 of the Finalists will actually receive a Merit Scholarship in one of three categories.

■ **Corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarships:**
Beginning in March, about 1,200 Finalists who satisfy the preferential criteria will be offered corporate-sponsored awards. Most are restricted to Finalists who are children of company employees; some are reserved for those who live in a specific community or who plan to pursue a particular career encouraged by the corporation. Some call for a one-time payment of $2,000. Others, renewable for up to four years, are either fixed-amount stipends ($1,000, $1,500, or $2,000) or variable-amount need-based stipends ($500 or more). *A student offered a corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship—whether the offer is declined or accepted—will not receive another offer.*

■ **National Merit Scholarships:**
The only Merit Scholarships correctly designated as "National" are these single-payment awards of $2,000. Beginning in late March 1995, about 2,000 Finalists, competing against others in their state, will be notified that they are winners. *Students who receive this offer will not receive another offer.*

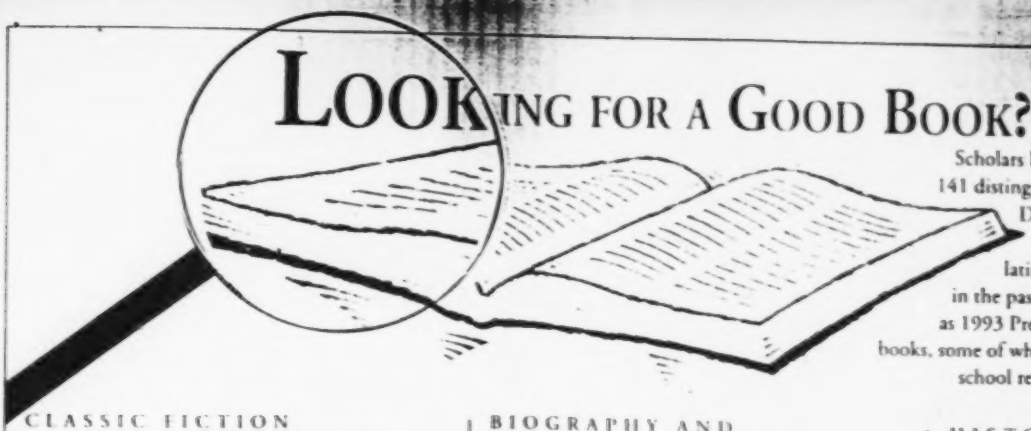
■ **College-sponsored Merit Scholarships:**
Beginning in mid-April, about 3,300 of these non-transferable scholarships are awarded by participating colleges or universities to Finalists who will attend their institution. Each stipend's value is determined by the granting college, with ranges from $250 to $2,000 per year for up to four years.

To be eligible for college-sponsored Merit Scholarships, qualifying Finalists must have notified NMSC of their interest in a participating college or university by May 30 of their final year in high school. Some of these scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so timing may be critical.

For the most complete information, read the 36-page PSAT/NMSQT *Student Bulletin*, which describes the new test, discusses test-taking strategies, explains correct answers to sample questions, and provides a complete practice test. Also included is a full listing of all NMSC corporate-sponsored and college/university-sponsored scholarships. Copies of the bulletin should be available at your school.

Questions about the PSAT/NMSQT exam?
Call (609) 771-7300.
Questions about the National Merit Scholarship Program?
Call (708) 866-5100.

LOOKING FOR A GOOD BOOK?



Each year the US Presidential Scholars Program* recognizes and honors up to 141 distinguished graduating high school seniors. During the selection process, applicants are asked to name the most stimulating book they have read outside school in the past six months. The students designated as 1993 Presidential Scholars chose the following books, some of which may be more appropriate for high school readers than for those in middle school.

CLASSIC FICTION

Ambrose Bierce, *Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*
Pearl S. Buck, *The Good Earth*
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Alexandre Dumas, *The Count of Monte Cristo*
Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*
Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*
Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*
John Milton, *Paradise Lost*
George Orwell, *1984*
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* / *The Death of Ivan Ilych*
Voltaire, *Candide*
Edith Wharton, *The Old Maid*

MODERN FICTION

Manilo Argueta, *One Day of Life*
Isaac Asimov, the *Foundation* trilogy
Marion Z. Bradley, *The Mists of Avalon*
Albert Camus, *The Plague*
Tom Clancy, *The Sum of All Fears*
James Clavell, *Shogun*
Pat Conroy, *The Lords of Discipline*
Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
E.M. Forster, *A Room with a View*
John Fowles, *The Collector*
Nicholas Gage, *Eleni*
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
Neil Gayman, *Good Omens*
John Grisham, *The Firm*
James Gurney, *Dinotopia*
Alex Haley, *Roots*
Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*
Stephen King, *The Stand*
Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*
Norman MacLean, *A River Runs through It*
Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*
Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*
Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*
Robert Pirsig, *Lila*
Chaim Potok, *The Chosen* / *My Name is Asher Lev*
Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead*
Salman Rushdie, *Shame*
Joanna Scott, *Arrogance: The Novel*
Erich Segal, *Doctors*
Art Spiegelman, *Maus*
John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*
Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*
Donna Tartt, *The Secret History*
John Kenneth Toole, *Confederacy of Dunces*
Leon Uris, *Exodus*
Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men*
Elie Wiesel, *Night*
Richard Wright, *Native Son*

Send us your reading recommendations for future issues!

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*
Richard Feynman, *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman*
Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*
Doris Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*
Gen. Norman H. Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*
Cathy Young, *Growing Up in Moscow: Memories of a Soviet Girlhood*

PSYCHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, CONTEMPLATIVE, INSPIRATIONAL

Richard Bach, *Illusions* / *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*
Larry Burkett, *Illuminati*
Matthew Fox, *Creation Spirituality*
Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*
Jim Harrison, *The Theory and Practice of Rivers* (poetry)
Benjamin Hoff, *The Tao of Pooh*
Anthony Robbins, *Unlimited Power*
Sun Tsu, *The Art of War*
Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*
Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*

MATH, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

James Gleick, *Chaos*
Douglas Hofstadter, *Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*
Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*
John Pekkanen, *M.D.s: Doctors Talk about Themselves*
Randy Rucker, *Infinity and the Mind*
Oliver Sachs, *Awakenings*
David Suzuki and Peter Knudtson, *Genethics*
Anne G. Tyng, *Simultaneous Randomness and Order*
Russ Walter, *The Secret Guide to Computers*

HISTORY, SOCIOLOGY, POLITICS

Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy*
Alexander Bickel, *The Least Dangerous Branch: The Supreme Court at the Bar of Politics*
Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History*
Susan Faludi, *Backlash*
John Taylor Gatto, "Why Schools Don't Educate" (essay)
E.D. Hirsch, Jr., *Cultural Literacy*
Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait*
Alex Kotlowitz, *There Are No Children Here*
Nicolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*
David McCullough, *Truman*
Anne Roiphe, *Generation without Memory*
Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On*
Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Chandler Burr, "Homosexuality and Biology" *(The Atlantic Monthly)*
Donald Singal, "The Other Crisis in American Education" *(The Atlantic Monthly)*
Robert Wright, "Science, God and Man" *(Time)*
author unidentified, "As Time Runs Out" *(Sports Illustrated)*

**** To receive an application to become a Presidential Scholar, you must take the SAT or ACT any time from October of your junior year to November of your senior year, must score exceptionally well, and must check the box that indicates your interest in the Student Search Service (SAT) or Educational Opportunity Service (ACT). To avoid disappointment, check the box every time you take the test.***

EXPOSITORY WRITING TUTORIAL-BY-MAIL

The Expository Writing Tutorial is offered by the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth as a multi-level program that links verbally talented students with professional writers who have teaching experience. Eligibility is based upon SAT-V and TSWE scores, with cut-offs ranging from 380/35 for students who are 13-1/2 years old to 530/50 for those who are 16-1/2. (The SAT need not have been taken through CTY's Talent Search.)

An assigned tutor initially makes an assessment of needs based upon essays the student submits with the EWT application. Then tutor and student exchange assignments and critiques by mail every 10 to 14 days during the school year. At the end of the course, the tutor writes a detailed evaluation of the student's work and progress.

Is EWT right for you? Participants must be highly motivated, intellectually adventuresome, and ready to work. Homework averages 3 to 5 hours per week. The total cost for the '93-'94 school year is $455, including a non-refundable $35 application fee. Need-based aid up to $150 is available.

Applications to EWT will be considered from August 31 to October 2, 1993; late registrations will be accepted on a space-available basis. Applications for scholarship aid must be received by September 25, 1993. If you are interested in becoming an EWT participant, call Ben Reynolds at CTY, (410) 516-0161.

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STUDENTS REVIEW: STANFORD

■ ■ ■

College Review Series

Choosing a college or university can be an overwhelming experience, even for talented students who have their choice of many fine institutions. Finding the school that is the best match for you requires weighing many factors: your major interests, financial considerations, location and size of the school, its overall prestige and unique atmosphere, and the reputation of specific departments.

This on-going series is intended to aid prospective college students in their search by offering insiders' views of selected colleges and universities, as expressed by current undergraduates or recent graduates who have exceptionally high academic ability. These students share a general bias in judging undergraduate education: they all have high expectations for a college or university's academic standards, its institutional and instructional flexibility, and its respect for nurturance of emerging talent.

Note that the number of student reviewers is small. Consider their personal perspectives only as one component while you gather factual information and impressions from such other sources as college catalogues, site visits, talks with officials and students on campus, and the advice of your guidance counselor and teachers.

Stanford University

In this issue Stanford University is reviewed by 16 students who major(ed) in math (6), computer science/electrical engineering (5), engineering (other) (1), biology (3), physics (3), and political science (1). (The number of majors exceeds 16 because several students have double majors.) Students' comments appear within quotation marks.

Quality of Academic Instruction for Undergraduates

With one exception, respondents gave high ratings to the overall level of undergraduate instruction. However, the math department was repeatedly singled out for criticism by students in math or math-related majors.

"Overall, the academics are superb. The overall technical (math + physics + engineering) environment is **fantastic.** *The resources and faculty are superb, but it requires individual initiative to take advantage of them. Math instruction was adequate, but not fantastic. I discovered other subjects and therefore did not pursue advanced undergraduate math."*

"The academic resources are excellent. Proximity and close ties to Silicon Valley give us incredible computer facilities. The libraries are big enough to get lost in, and there are ample tutoring resources for students who need help."

"Generally, very good. The main problem is that many courses, particularly introductory and science courses, are extremely large (300 students). These are generally broken down into smaller sections for discussion, but the full class lectures are huge. The quality of the faculty is often excellent, and students willing to make an effort can make good contact with professors."

"Overall, my opinion is that undergraduate teaching needs a great deal of improvement. Stanford is still very much the research institution and currently leaves a lot to be desired in the area of teaching, regardless of the lip-service given. The curriculum and academic resources overall are very good—what one would expect from an Ivy or "top ten" school. It is a great academic environment, but its weak spot is undergraduate teaching; students should realize that they'll have to make up for this with harder work and effort to get the most out of a Stanford education."

"The freshman calculus sequences are downright pitiful; except for one professor, hardly any of the instructors care about the class. This is true of most of the math department; most (although certainly not all) profs are good researchers but horrible teachers. Foreign language cores are exceptionally strong."

"In the math department, instruction is not all that great. Don't get me wrong—it's a topnotch school. It's just that the math department doesn't seem to take good care of its majors. The computer science department is great in comparison. Classes are well-staffed, especially the introductory ones. The department takes good care of its majors and provides lots of benefits and opportunities. Overall, the instruction at Stanford is great."

"In general, Stanford is a very flexible school. For example, they are very generous in handing out credit for AP exams, and you can drop classes any time until 24 hours before the final exam. There isn't as much pressure on grades as I've heard about at Ivy League schools."

Social Life

The focus of social activity at Stanford is the dorms, where numerous cultural and academic events occur as part of the university's "Residential Education" program. Most respondents liked the fact that social life at Stanford is so campus oriented. The Greek system of fraternities and sororities is fairly small. Palo Alto is not a college town. Students desiring the cultural offerings of a big city travel to San Francisco, approximately 30 miles north and accessible by train.

"Unsurpassed. The exposure to intelligent students from all over was incredible. And these students are able to have FUN at the same time as they pursue excellence. The weather, living conditions, open and friendly atmosphere, and social opportunities simply cannot be rivaled. Intramural sports are extremely popular, and the Bay Area is a cultural motherlode."

"Stanford really encourages a relaxed dorm environment, especially during freshman year. It is the rare undergraduate who hasn't found a balance between getting work done and having a good time by the end of freshman year."

"Housing at Stanford is terrific! Not because it's beautiful (although most of it is) and certainly not because the food is good, but because of Residential Education. Your dorm becomes the center of your life, and all 90 people in it are your friends. Most people live in dorms all four years. It's wonderful."

"You can really choose your own lifestyle at Stanford. For example, since I found many in the dorms to be shallow, and since I hated residential education, I decided to live in a co-op. We are quite undisciplined, and it's great."

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"Much social life revolves around dorm life; this results in tight friendships freshman year, but can limit scope of interaction as well as privacy. Many jokes about Stanford dating (or rather, the lack thereof). Palo Alto closes at 11 pm; there is no college town whatsoever. Instead, Stanford is a big, self-sufficient campus. Not a highly intellectual atmosphere."

What Do You Like Best About Stanford?

"The interaction with other intelligent students who are broad-based enough to pursue other interests (sports, music, the arts) and are able to relax and have a good time. College is not about four years of problem sets, GPAs, and exams. It's about **learning** *and* **growing.** *I am convinced that nowhere else would I have found the combination of academic excellence and opportunities for personal and social growth that I found at Stanford."*

"Academically, the thing I liked best about Stanford was its **balance.** *It has world-class departments in math, science, and engineering, as well as in fields such as economics, English, political science, and history. Also, the good weather year-round makes it easy to unwind with a game of basketball or Ultimate Frisbee after a day in class or in the lab."*

"The atmosphere was fantastic—smart students, but not competitive overachievers. Most are satisfied in finding their own niche and being friendly with everyone else, even if they are striving toward the same goal. A friend who visited during our finals observed, 'Stanford is more relaxed and stress free during finals than Harvard was on any weekend.'"

What Do You Like Least About Stanford?

"Having to leave."

"It's hard. Even now, as a sophomore, I'm less than confident in courses outside the sciences. Also, a lot of the students seem too materialistic."

"In part due to the large, isolated campus and the academic emphasis/intensity that stems from its reputation, I find too many people who don't have any sense or perspective of real life. What's lacking sometimes is an interest or passion in activities or events that goes beyond Stanford's campus."

"I think that, because Stanford is such a great place, some people fall into the trap of thinking that it's the **only place**—*the center of the universe. Having been out of school made me realize that life without Stanford does continue and that I can have a great time away from 'The Big Taco Bell.'"*

Who Would Be Most Compatible with the Academic and Social Atmosphere at Stanford?

The responses suggest that students who are highly intelligent and responsible, but somewhat mellow, would most enjoy Stanford.

"I think that, to get the most out of Stanford, you have to be a little laid back. Stanford is not really the place for cut-throat academic competition. The students here, though they worry about grades (who doesn't!), don't take it to the extreme that students at some schools do."

Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305
(415) 723-2091

- 4-year private coed university
- Suburban campus in large town, Palo Alto, 29 miles south of San Francisco.
- Quarter system, extensive summer session, Study Abroad programs.
- Full-time undergraduate enrollment 1993-94: 3,544 men; 3,020 women.
- Special facilities: Observatory, linear accelerator, museum, art gallery, 30 libraries, nature preserve, marine station, instructional television network, Braun Music Center.

"No ultra-intense, bragging, competitive people belong here. It's hard to see yourself as being that way; but if you are the type who is motivated by the thought of being #1, don't come here. It's not that you won't find plenty of competition; it's just that very few people here like to talk about their accomplishments."

"You can go to Stanford and be entrenched in your studies, or you can be totally care-free and enjoy the non-academic life. I think I loved it there so much because I have both sides: I loved being challenged and learning and studying and enriching myself; but I also loved spending lots of time with friends, being involved in school activities, and playing touch football for study breaks."

"Someone with an open mind. Someone willing to take responsibility for him/herself and make important choices. Stanford has a lot of opportunities (academic, extra-curricular, social), but it's up to you to take advantage of them and make your stay worthwhile."

If You Had It To Do Over Again, Would You Go To Stanford?

All respondents answered "Yes" (most with great enthusiasm). Echoing earlier comments, they emphasized the excellence of the whole experience. As one student put it, "I've loved Stanford; it's a great place to *live*."

"Yes. I don't think there is any place else that provides academic excellence in as many areas, with as nice a standard of living, and that is as much fun to attend."

"YES! It would be hard to do better. Where else could you find #1 academic programs with #1 athletic programs? Stanford is Yale academics in a younger environment, with sun, fun, numerous winning teams, and the best people you could ever meet!"

"When I first came, I wasn't sure; my freshman year was so overwhelming. But I've come to value my Stanford experience a lot. The level of academics has pushed me to do my best, and the motivation and achievements of the other students have been inspiring. After high school, I was looking to be challenged, and I think Stanford was a good place to go. I just didn't realize how much better I could be."

"Yes, even given my criticisms of it, it's still the best choice. I personally had to get away from the New England cynicism. Plus, in the end, most things are what you make of them."

"Hmm, good question. On the one hand, if the purpose of college is to gain an education, then 'Yes.' This school, as Pangloss would say, is 'the best of all possible Ivy League schools.' On the other hand, if the purpose of college is to be happy and have fun, then 'No,' I'd go to Chico State instead. Maybe even UCLA."

As you try to find the college or university best suited to you, the views of Stanford presented above may be helpful. Keep in mind that these students might have had similar positive or negative experiences had they attended a different university. At any college, it is important for the individual student to seek out challenging academic experiences and the best professors, and to create a social life that best fits his or her personal style.

Note: The students quoted in the College Review Series are expressing their own views, which are not necessarily those of JHU or CTY.

CREATIVE MINDS

ImaGiNe...

Submit your creative work—poems, brain teasers, short stories/essays/book reviews. We look forward to hearing from you. Please write to: Imagine • SET at CTY • The Johns Hopkins University • Baltimore, MD 21218-9985

BOOK REVIEW *by Vivian Bush*

To Kill a Mockingbird is a classic novel by Harper Lee, set in the racially tense time and place of Alabama during the Great Depression. It is a story dealing with an age-old problem, the animosity and distance between people of different races and types. It delivers the message that these differences can be overcome with love and understanding.

As the story opens, the narrator, Jean Louise "Scout" Finch, enters the first grade in the local public school and immediately must learn to understand the foreign customs of her classmates from poverty-stricken country homes. After Scout's misunderstanding with her teacher on the first day of school, her father gives her his advice for getting along with all kinds of people all through life: stand in the other person's shoes for just a minute, and get his point of view. This advice allows her to understand others more deeply later in her life.

Scout gets a new perspective on an elderly neighbor, Mrs. Dubose, by watching her struggle against the enemy within herself. Mrs. Dubose is loud, annoying, even abusive, but she has the courage to break herself of a strong morphine addiction, even though it gives her great pain. Scout learns that bravery may come in surprising forms from unexpected people.

When Scout hears the tale of Boo Radley, the neighborhood "ghost," she is terrified of this seemingly inhuman presence so near her home. But time teaches her that he is merely another human being, with eccentric habits, but with a kind heart. He secretly gives her presents, ending with his greatest gift of all: her life. When she finally meets him, she is ready to accept him as an unusual, shy, but devoted friend.

Relations between the Finches and the rest of the town become strained when Atticus Finch, Scout's lawyer father, agrees to defend a black man. The ultimate question is whether the white people of the town will choose the path of justice or of their own prejudice. The Finches struggle for the right cause, but the battle they face is hard.

From these various incidents in the life of a young girl, Harper Lee builds her central theme of acceptance. Only one kind of person is considered unworthy of understanding: he who willingly chooses evil as a way of life. This kind of person is represented in the character of Bob Ewell, the town good-for-nothing who is content to live in the town dump on his neighbors' charity. He is suspected of abusing his children, and eventually attempts murder to get revenge for an imagined wrong.

This book is well written and of great literary quality. It makes its point eloquently and well. It truly deserves the name of classic.

Vivian Bush is a 15-year-old 10th grader being schooled at home in Houston, Texas. She studies clarinet and piano with outside teachers.

CUMIN AND PAPRIKA

by Kaushik Mukherjee

Whenever I smell foreign spices
it is Calcutta in December.
I am sitting on a balcony
reading a book and
watching people walk by.
My grandfather is sitting at a
desk, writing in a Bengali script
I only half-understand.

But that is not my story.
My story is a boy
reading a script he now knows
and mourning the man who wrote it
while, on the stove, cumin and paprika
decorate the dinner which is not quite
cooked.

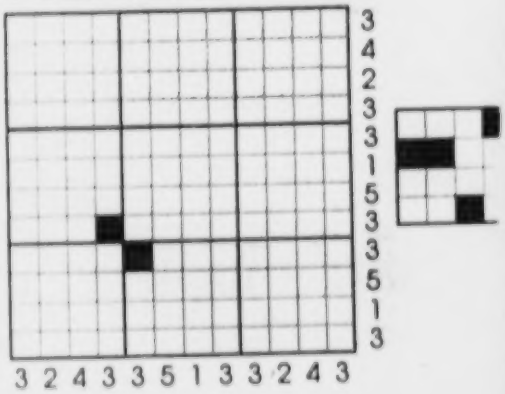
Fourteen-year-old **Kaushik Mukherjee** is a 10th grader living in Cupertino, California. He enjoys participating in math, science, and sports competitions and is an award-winning pianist. One of his poems will soon be published in a book and on audio cassette.

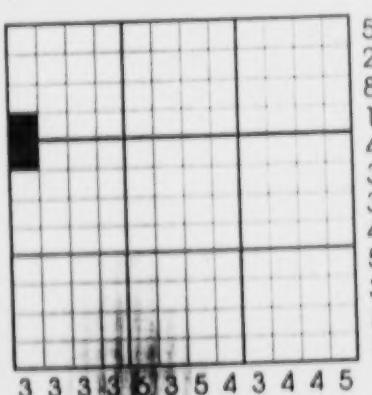
PUZZLES *by Tim Boester*

Directions:

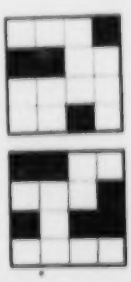
Right: Use the small 4x4 stamp at right to fill in the squares of the large 12x12 grid. The stamp may be rotated so that any of its four sides faces upward. When the grid is correctly filled in, the total number of black squares in a row or column will equal the number found beside or below that row or column.

The squares already blacked in are hints to get you started; they must be black in the completed puzzle.





Left: The rules are the same for this puzzle, except that you m use either of the two stamps to fill in the squares in the gri



Tim Boester, a senior at Western Reserve Academy in Ohio, enjoys creating puzzles and mazes, more of which will appear in future issues.

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